

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

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TO AMEMBASSY RABAT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MADRID IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 086359

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINR, AG, MO, MR, FR, SP

SUBJECT: ALLEGED CIA ROLE IN SPANISH EVACUATION OF THE
SAHARA

REF: STATE 85749

1. DESPITE STATEMENTS IN BEN WELLS' BOOK REVIEW, THERE ARE
NO REFERENCES IN VERNON WALTERS' AUTOBIOGRAPHY TO MEETINGS
WITH THE PLO OR TO CIA ROLE IN SPANISH EVACUATION OF
SAHARA.

2. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF WELLS' BOOK REVIEW DEALING WITH
THESE SUBJECTS, PRESUMABLY ON BASIS OF INTERVIEW.

BEGIN TEXT:
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"DETAILS OF WALTERS' SECRET ASSIGNMENTS APPEAR IN HIS NEW
BOOK, "SILENT MISSIONS", PUBLISHED LAST WEEK BY DOUBLEDAY.
DURING THE NIXON ADMINISTRATION, FOR INSTANCE, HE WAS DIS-
PATCHED ON AN UNPUBLICIZED MISSION TO SPAIN IN 1971 TO DIS-
CUSS WITH THE AILING FRANCO SPAIN'S POLITICAL FUTURE IN THE
EVENT OF FRANCO'S DEATH. IN 1974 HE FLEW SECRETLY TO

BUENOS AIRES TO CONFER WITH JUAN PERON; THE ARGENTINE DICTATOR'S VIOLENT ANTI-AMERICANISM BEGAN NOTICEABLY EASING BEFORE HIS DEATH LATER THAT YEAR.

WALTERS ALSO HELPED NEGOTIATE WITH KINGS JUAN CARLOS OF SPAIN AND HASSAN OF MOROCCO THE PEACEFUL WITHDRAWAL IN LATE 1975 OF SPANISH FORCES FROM THE TERRITORY THEN KNOWN AS THE SPANISH SAHARA AND ITS EVENTUAL ABSORPTION BY MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA.

ONE OF WALTERS' MOST SENSITIVE PRESIDENTIAL MISSIONS, AND ONE ABOUT WHICH HE WILL STILL SAY LITTLE, TOOK PLACE SOON AFTER PALESTINIAN TERRORISTS HAD SEIZED THE SAUDI ARABIAN EMBASSY IN KHARTOUM, THE SUDAN, ON MARCH 2, 1973, ASSASSINATING U.S. AMBASSADOR CLEO A. NOEL JR. AND THE DEPARTING U.S. CHARGE D'AFFAIRES, GEORGE C. MOORE. WALTERS, ALONE AND UNARMED, MET PALESTINIAN DELEGATES IN A COUNTRY WHICH HE WILL IDENTIFY ONLY AS "SYMPATHETIC TO THEIR CAUSE". THOUGH UNABLE TO SPEAK ARABIC, HE HAD, PRIOR TO THE MEETING, CLOSELY STUDIED THE PALESTINIANS' POLITICAL AIMS, THEIR LITERATURE, AND EVEN THEIR POETRY. ONE CAN SURMISE THE MESSAGE THAT HE TRANSMITTED ON BEHALF OF NIXON AND KISSINGER: LEAVE OUR DIPLOMATS ALONE--OR FACE ALL-OUT U.S. RETRIBUTION.

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."WE ARE ABLE TO COMMUNICATE", SAYS WALTERS CRYPTICALLY, "AND THERE WERE NO FURTHER ACTS OF BLOOD BETWEEN US." SINCE THAT DAY NO U.S. DIPLOMAT HAS BEEN ATTACKED BY PALESTINIAN MILITANTS. END TEXT. VANCE

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